

Concordville, PA— This Friday, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) toured the Concordville campus of SouthCo before meeting privately with senior leadership from the local company. The Congressman expressed his enthusiasm for the growth of one of the area's largest employers and voiced his continued support of the manufacturing industry.

"I have often asserted that the training of skilled workers and the development of the technical manufacturing industry is a large component of maintaining our country's economic security," said the Congressman. "In such a volatile financial climate, it is our government's duty to create an atmosphere where businesses have the resources and incentives to hire local workers."

SouthCo, a global commercial grade door hardware supplier and distributor, was originally founded in 1899 as a pipe manufacturer and was reestablished as a specialty fastener and latch business in 1945. According to the Philadelphia Business Journal, the Company employs more than 500 residents of Concordville, and is an important employer in the seventh district.

"Delaware County alone has lost 762 small businesses since 2001, with 22 percent of them in manufacturing," said Congressman Sestak. "This had come as a significant blow to the industry. I want to thank Brian MacNeill and his talented staff for welcoming me here today to discuss these critical issues."

The Congressman emphasized that he believes a main component of strengthening the manufacturing industry and the economy in general is starting at the educational level. To address the challenges of preparing a new workforce for the globalizing 21st century world, the Congressman secured \$1.25 million from the federal government to improve infrastructure and capacity of Cheyney's Science and Technology building. The Congressman also recently secured \$170,000 for the Delaware County Community College's Science, Engineering, and Technology Complex and \$187,000 for the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce's Job Readiness Program. By funneling funds directly into job training programs, the Congressman said, the government can ensure that the new generation of workers will be fully equipped to tackle modern industry.

This was not the Congressman's first visit to SouthCo—he attended a building rededication there in July of this year and addressed the crowd of more than 400. At the time, the Congressman expressed his enthusiasm for the growth of one of the area's largest employers

and voiced his continued support of the manufacturing industry.

The Congressman has also actively addressed the issue by attending and hosting a series of summits and roundtables, which attract employees as well as small and big business owners. Recently he joined some 100 companies in a meeting convened by Boeing and focused on contracts and procurement. The Congressman facilitated the meeting and met on numerous occasions with Boeing to request that they allow manufactures in the district to bid on jobs first, before contracting them to companies outside of our region. He also organized and hosted the Business Procurement summit, which attracted 400 businesspeople, 40 large business contractors, and 15 federal and state government procurement agencies. The summit successfully provided local business unprecedented access to large corporate and government contractors.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.*

####